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### THE OLD WAGON-ROAD.

FEW things have added more to the prosiness of life than the making of railway lines. With them, beauty and the joy of nature are at a discount. They run through the quiet fields, obscure cherished views, and diverge roads and pathways from their old and time-honoured way. They have no heart. They cut through the woods and destroy their sylvan beauty; they tear through the sequestered dell, and along the side of the most secluded lake. They not merely burrow under the mountain, but they blast its side, and leave for ever the bare and ugly scar. They disdain the long and fond reminiscences of generations, and drive through the spot where men have loved to wander and to ruminative. Nothing is too sacred for them. Past memories and rich traditions must bow their heads; and the spot in nature that has been a very sanctuary to the souls of men, has to lie low and pass for ever from remembrance. It is the work of the utilitarian. To him naught is hallowed; poetry is a delusion; and all that is lovely in nature must stand aside, if it happens to lie in the path of his iron way.

But nature strives to compensate man for his losses. She is for ever drawing her mantle over her scars. She creates new charms, opens new vistas, and offers situations full of that joy and tranquillity that gives peace to the human heart. She is reclaiming her own, and proving that in the end nature must reign supreme. Nowhere is this more marked than in those early lines, which, having served their purposes, are now abandoned, and fallen once more into the embrace of mother nature. Spread over the country are many such, so far reclaimed as to add to the number of secluded spots where one may retire and find rest. They are known only to and by the few who desire the peace of nature, and by those who, bound up in one another, seek their seclusion, and find in them a lovers' loaning.

Of these, one lies near our heart. We have known it long, and treasured up many memories of the life and the beauty of the place. We can scarcely say in which of the four seasons of the year we like it best. The summer dress has its charm; but its winter aspect has a fascination which few townsmen can realise. Yet, probably its sweetest temper lies in the spring, when the foliage is budding and hopeful, when the song of the bird is full of love, and when cherished ambition springs up anew in the human breast.

The entrance to its precincts is not obtrusive. The multitude pass and know it not. It was one of the early primitive lines—not for passenger traffic, but for running wagons from a coal-pit some miles up the country, to an old harbour frequented by coasting sloops, and by brig and schooner that knew the countries facing the North Sea. It has been crossed and recrossed, in part eliminated, and sections standing bare scarcely tell their tale to the wayfarer. A modern railway line has dissected its course, diverted and thrown the high-road over the iron pathway, and so completely severed its country route from that to the harbour, that one has difficulty in realising its original occupation.

We slip in from the high-road through what appears an accidental opening in the hedgerow, and at once find ourselves isolated with nature. It is a grass-grown avenue that first meets the eye, threaded by a footpath worn bare by the feet of its worshippers. Looking west and beyond the pastoral fields, we see the sun approaching his setting over the Ochil Hills. The cornfields are bare, and their harvest lies snugly stacked close to the old farmhouse; but the turnips are still in the soil, and their breath smells sweet after the shower of rain. A few rooks and a flock of starlings are scattered over a stubble-field; while a number of seamews give close attendance on some workers filling their last bags on the potato-field. One or two songbirds flit past, fat and sleeky,

cheerful witnesses of the goodness of the harvest. They have little to say to us now. An occasional note may be heard; but no song, save that of the Robin, whose cheerful notes sound sweetly in the stillness of the evening.

Approaching the pathway where it narrows, a blackbird gives his alarmed cry—a warning to other birds that a stranger is near—and betakes himself up the steep bank amid the trees and the shrubbery. A loud whirr of wings from the fir plantation on the other side leads us to think that we have disturbed the partridge in his solitude. It is in this narrow pathway, closely shut in from the outer world, that, thrown on ourselves, we realise the pleasing experience of seeing our thoughts fresh and beautiful as the verdant green that surrounds us. The sound of the stream as it flows past, murmurs over its pebbly bed. The water is low, but the bank shows where the winter torrent has laid bare the roots of trees, and washed the soil from the face of the rock. Higher up, where it falls into the pool, birds congregate and drink of its waters when they think no eye sees them. It is by its side that they take their morning bath; and one can see on the pathway the marks of those who prefer the dust-bath. One place in particular appears to be favoured most. There the earth must be finer than in other parts. It is near to where a piece of wood juts from the ground—the end of an old sleeper! A few of these are to be seen as we saunter along, scarcely recognisable by him who walks to cover a distance, but distinctly discernible in the meditative walk. Some of these old ends are crumbling, some moss-grown. Strange and solitary reminders of the original purpose for which this hollow was designed. Over them the noisy wagons once made their way, where now the birds congregate, and, in the silence and solitude, take their dust-bath.

By the pool, just where it eddies round a bank, closely bound together by the roots of a beech-tree, is a corner favoured by the wren for its nest. Skilfully harmonised with its surroundings so as not to attract attention, the dome-shaped structure is placed under the bank, and thus sheltered from the weather. Often have we watched her flitting among the bushes, or entering the nest with food for her young; and we have felt amused at the male bird's cry of alarm as he has flitted unexpectedly across our path and disappeared among the shrubbery. They are a gentle pair, feed well on the enemies of the cultivator of the soil, and commit little depredation on what is valued. There is no sweeter song than that of the wren in spring-time, and we are compelled to wonder how so small a bird can produce so large and powerful a note.

Farther on, the narrow pathway opens into a glade, grass-covered and like a lawn, over

which is the bright blue of the sky, and into which the sun loves to pour his rays. It is surrounded with trees, and thickly set with shrubbery. The place is an epitome of nature; it has its moods, and it changes with the seasons. In the wintry days, when the branches of the trees are bare, the squirrel can be seen bounding from tree to tree, running over the top branches of the wood as if it were a highway. The hare in the breeding season becomes bold, and, losing much of his fear of man, frequents the pathway. In the early part of the year, when the snow has scarcely left us and the branches are still bare, the place resounds with the note of the missel-thrush announcing the approach of spring. With that budding period the flourish creeps out, the wild cherry with its mass of white crimson-tipped blossom leading the way, and foretelling the coming of the leaves. And as the golden whin appeals with its smell of apricot, followed by the yellow broom, the white hawthorn, and the red, the white, and the pinky-white rose, the birds are busy, and fill the place with their song. Rich and luscious, full to overflowing, is this glade when the summer robes herself in all her glory. The mystery and sound of a multitudinous life buzzes all around us. From those lime-trees, now taking on their tint of autumnal yellow, comes a hum of insects, deep and sonorous as the bourdon stop of an organ. It is the bees busy with the blossom. They love it—love it to intoxication. They suck the honey until they are drunk with it; then, falling to the ground, become an easy prey to the wasps, who kill them and take their honey. Strange infatuation; but not stranger than what sometimes occurs with those who believe they have wiser heads.

There is a dell lying near to the side of this glade. It looks as if in the early days it had been quarried out for some purpose connected with the lime. There is no trace of that purpose now. Covered with trees and shrubs, and continually sounding with the silvery voice of the stream, near which the primrose plants her yellow carpet in the spring, it is a safe dwelling-place for both bird and beast. At the head of the glade the trees and hedges come together, leaving a small green vaulted opening, through which the sunlight can be seen resting on a further glade. It is a pretty peep, charming in its sweetness, and suggestive of those olden days when fair maids and brave men would of a peaceful evening rest themselves in such a scene, while the actors gave a sylvan play, or the musicians sung their madrigal.

The old road is not ancient enough to have a story of legend and romance. It has no fairy dell, no lover's leap, no strange and unexplained mystery hanging over it, to awake wonder and awe in the minds of the youthful

and the superstitious. Tragedies there have been, if one could but know them. There are few rail lines made but leave some dark trail behind. But there is one tale of mournful fate that lingers over the place. The story is not recorded in local history, nor is it known to the multitude. It is only to be heard by the fireside of the few old enough to remember it, and of those who have sat hearing grandfather tales while the wintry wind whistled in the blast. A horseman one dull day was riding up the wagon-road intent on other thoughts than impending danger, when a number of laden trucks running down the incline, uncontrolled, as was the wont in those early days, came suddenly round the bend and killed both horse and rider. A short but tragic story, doomed to die with the third generation.

We could pursue the old road for miles farther. We have done so before, and at each turn obtained a different picture and some fresh outlying object of interest. But for an evening stroll, we prefer to turn off here and make a round. We have a preference for a round in our walk. It does not bring us over the same path twice. It offers a fresh variety of objects for the gaze. No matter how good a subject may be, it is apt to lose its freshness and charm if we indulge too much in it.

Ascending the few moss-grown stone steps that stand by the old and disused well, we gain a higher pathway, which affords an extensive view of the country southward. It is a sudden transition from the narrow introspective pathway to the great view that takes us out of ourselves, and speaks of larger interests than those that lie at our own door. Looking over the tops of the trees that mark the line of the old road lying in the hollow, we marvel at the small space in which so much beauty and so much sentiment are stored. But it is wonderful to find how much can be discovered in narrow compass when attention is closely centred on it. Beauty pops out at odd corners where at first it was little expected, and the ear is quickened to detect sounds that are only caught in leisurely moments with nature.

Passing along the roadway, the country stretches before us as far as the northern range of the Pentland Hills. The waters of the Forth can be seen gleaming in lines between the pasture-lands of Fife and the Lothians. The ship in full sail is going before a fair wind; and one could almost imagine he heard the throb of the engine as the steamer went on its outward course. The blue smoke of the distant cluster of houses rises from the hollow; and from the old church tower that dates as far back as pre-reformation times, comes the sound of the curfew bell. The curfew! Scarcely one of the inhabitants knows what it means. They call it the 'eight o'clock bell.' Only one here and there has dipped into antiquity and can tell its ancient origin. There is, however, little need to wonder at this callousness regarding the far past. Things of later date have passed from memory as if

they had never existed. To most of them, there is even forgotten the knowledge and the history of that romantic byway, known to the few as the Old Wagon-road.

R. A. M.

THE LAWYER'S SECRET.\*

CHAPTER IX.—LADY BOLDON MAKES UP HER MIND.

AFTER the lawyer left her, Lady Boldon went to her room, but not to sleep. She knew well that there would be no sleep for her eyes that night. A second time she had come to a crisis in her existence. A second time she was called on to make a decision on which her whole future would depend. Now, as before, she had no one to guide her. She must walk alone. To the moral aspect of the question she was absolutely blind. She considered that her late husband had pledged his word that, after his death, Roby Chase should belong to her for life, and that he had no moral right to revoke his former will. In this, no doubt, she was wrong. She knew before her marriage that the estate was not to be settled upon her, but left to her by will, and she was quite aware that a will is always revocable. If she had objected to the arrangement, she might have withdrawn from the marriage, or insisted upon having a proper settlement; but she had never doubted her power to maintain her influence over Sir Richard's mind; and she had preferred to make no objection to what was proposed, lest she should be accused of being actuated by purely mercenary motives.

To all this Lady Boldon was blind. But what was she to do now? Renounce all the fruit of the sacrifice of herself which she had made, of her eighteen months of bondage, of her renunciation of the man she loved? Allow Sir Richard's caprice, his mere will and pleasure, to take away her rights, and condemn her to choose between perpetual widowhood and a life of poverty? Never! The idea was intolerable! She would rather die than suffer it to be so.

What then? Was she going to marry this elderly lawyer, this Mr Felix? No; she was not going to sacrifice herself a second time for wealth. Lands and money would be nothing to her unless she had her liberty. And yet, on the other hand, the idea of reversing Sir Richard's unjust decree, of balking his intention to rob her—as she deemed it—fascinated her. She could not bring herself to answer Mr Felix with a plain 'No'; and still less did she mean to say 'Yes' to him.

The morning came—ten o'clock, the hour that she had fixed for the final interview with the solicitor, drew near; and she had not yet decided. She sat down and wrote Mr Felix a short note, in which she said: 'I cannot make up my mind. It was cruel of you to give me only one night in which to decide a question of such importance. It would be useless to see you now. Come to my room the moment you get home from the funeral. That will at least give me one or two more hours. We

can say all we want to say to each other in a few seconds, before the meeting in the dining-room.'

This she sealed, and sent to the solicitor, remaining up-stairs all the morning.

Soon the bustle in the lower part of the house increased. Among the first to arrive was Mr Frederick Boldon, the heir-at-law. Finding that nobody of more importance than the lawyer and old Mr Pugh, Sir Richard's steward, was visible, he constituted himself the head of the establishment, and graciously received the various guests as they arrived. Foremost among these were Sir Gilbert Fanshawe, a baronet of good family whose estate lay in that part of Hampshire; and Mr Jonas Proudfoot, an old business friend of the deceased knight. On one occasion Sir Richard had been able to do the baronet a service, and on the latter gentleman expressing his sense of the obligation, Sir Richard, true to his business traditions, had promptly responded by asking the baronet to be one of his executors. Sir Gilbert had hemmed and hawed, and showed his unwillingness plainly enough; but he had been fairly trapped, and had been compelled to agree to do what was asked of him.

The guests in the house were not numerous, for Sir Richard had not been greatly liked by his neighbours. However, the gentry sent their carriages, and the tenants on the estate attended as a matter of course, so that there was no lack of that outward respect which Sir Richard Boldon's conspicuous success in life had so well deserved.

The sombre procession was at length formed, and it began to drag its slow length on to the churchyard. In one of the last of the mourning coaches Mr Felix was seated. He had purposely chosen a place as far in the rear as possible, that he might be one of the earliest to leave the churchyard, and return to the house. During the melancholy journey, his brain was tortured with one anxious thought. He did not hear a single word of the burial service. The chant of the choristers as they sang the funeral psalm stirred no emotion in his breast.

And Lady Boldon? It happened to her, as it often happens to one in her circumstances—light seemed suddenly to break upon her mind, and what had been doubtful became clear. It was not the light of truth, but the dull earthborn glare by which most men are content to walk through the wilderness of this world.

Hardly had the funeral procession passed out of sight, when the mist seemed to roll away from her mind. She reflected that if she allowed the new will to be read within the next hour, the step would be irrevocable. If she were to marry, the stately pile which she had come to regard as home would know her no more. The fields and woods and meadows that stretched from the park wall to the horizon would be hers no longer. She would have no part or lot in them, and no chance of recovering possession of them.

But if she gave Mr Felix the promise he demanded, it need not be kept at once. She did not think of making that promise with the deliberate intention of breaking it. She

felt sure that if she were to play false the lawyer would outwit her, by contriving that the later will should come to light without compromising himself. At least, she supposed he could do so. But if she were to agree to his terms, he could not expect that she should fulfil her promise for some time to come—say three years, or perhaps four. In two or three years a great deal might happen. Mr Felix might change his mind, and get over this passion, which, at his age, was really absurd. Or, he might be persuaded to release her from the engagement, and yet show her the flaw, or whatever it was, by means of which the second will might be shown to be inoperative. Or, he might die. In any case, delay in producing the new will could do no harm; and the chapter of accidents might bring forth something that would decide the matter in her favour. Clearly, she thought her best course was to accept the lawyer's proposal.

So, when Mr Felix returned from the funeral, and walked with hasty strides to Lady Boldon's boudoir, she was ready to receive him.

'I agree to what you wish, Mr Felix,' were her first words.

A cry burst from his lips, from his heart. He seized the lady's hand without knowing what he was doing, and held it between his own, while he gazed on her face like one in an ecstasy. But even while he gazed, he remembered how the woman's consent had been wrung from her: he dropped his eyes, let her hand fall, and drew in his breath.

'We need be under no pretence with each other,' said Lady Boldon, forcing a smile to her lips. 'I give you this promise because it is the only way of preserving what I consider to be my own property. And I must stipulate for three years of freedom.'

'Three years! Oh, Lady Boldon, that is a terribly long time—an eternity it would seem to me. Have pity on me!—I see the guests are here. We have not another moment.—Do spare me one year more. Do not torture me beyond two years!'

It was characteristic of Lady Boldon that at that moment she forgot her repugnance to this marriage—forget, one might almost say, what it was she was promising to do—and thought of nothing but the expression of pain, of real suffering, in the face before her.

'Let it be two years, then,' she said, in a gentler tone.

Mr Felix seemed to be transformed into another creature. A new light shone in his eyes; he stood upright; even his voice seemed to change, and to become more manly. He lifted Lady Boldon's hand once more to his lips, thanked her with a look, and left her.

Already several gentlemen—Mr Bruce, Sir Gilbert Fanshawe, Mr Proudfoot, Mr Frederick Boldon, and one or two others—were assembling in the large dining-room. Mr Felix followed them, and took his seat at the table in the middle of the room.

'Lady Boldon is not here, I think,' he said, glancing tranquilly round the apartment.—'Perhaps, sir,' he continued, turning to Mr Bruce, 'you would be kind enough to see her, and, if possible, bring her down-stairs with you.

Her presence is not by any means essential ; still, it is usual, and it is certainly more desirable that all the persons likely to be interested in the will should be present when it is read.'

' You would have all the gossips in the county here at that rate,' said Mr Proudfoot. This was understood to be a joke ; but as the speaker was only a stranger, and the occasion was a solemn one, or, at any rate, one of semi-solomnity, nobody so much as smiled.

The Rector departed on his errand, and in a few moments returned, without his daughter.

' It is of little consequence,' observed the solicitor ; and he drew a long blue envelope from his pocket. ' This,' he said, ' is Sir Richard's will. I drew it up for him before his marriage ; and it was executed shortly after the marriage was celebrated.' He thereupon proceeded to read the will. There were various charitable bequests, a legacy of five thousand pounds to Frederick Boldon, and legacies of one thousand pounds each to the testator's executors, Sir Gilbert Fanshawe and Jonas Proudfoot. All the remainder of the testator's property, both real and personal, was bequeathed to the executors in trust for Lady Boldon for life. After her death it was to go to the persons then living who might be the testator's heir-at-law and next-of-kin. And there the will ended.

' Go on, sir ! ' cried Frederick Boldon, in a voice hoarse with anxiety and passion.

' I have read it all,' answered the lawyer.

' Read the codicil ! '

' There is no codicil.'

' Then there is a new will. Where is it ? '

' If there is a will later than this, of course this one is mere waste paper,' said Mr Felix, looking the disappointed heir full in the face.

' But there is a new will ! I know it ! I saw my uncle—Sir Richard, you know, gentlemen, was my uncle—I saw him only two months ago ; and he said that he regretted having made the will he had made, and that he intended to alter it, and to make either a codicil or a new will, leaving the bulk of his property to me, his natural heir. I say that new will exists, and it must be produced. Where is it ? '

' You forget that my late client's cabinet, and his writing-desk and drawers, have not been opened,' said the solicitor. ' One of my clerks sealed them up.—If you, gentlemen'—turning to the two executors—' consent to their being opened now, we may succeed in finding some such document as Mr Boldon describes.'

The drawers and other receptacles were opened, and a thorough search was made, everybody joining it, by Mr Felix's request. No will or codicil, or anything resembling one, was found.

' This is infamous ! ' exclaimed the disappointed man, striking his fist on the back of a chair. ' I believe such a will was made, and that it has been destroyed or suppressed ! I feel certain of it.'

As the young man spoke, he looked at the lawyer in so marked a manner that everybody observed it, and Mr Felix thought that he was bound to notice the insult.

' This is too much,' he said. ' I can make great allowances for a gentleman who is suffering from a keen sense of disappointment ; but this is going altogether too far.'

Sympathetic murmurs were heard from those standing round ; and Sir Gilbert tried to pour oil on the troubled waters by remarking—' Our deceased friend changed his mind once, it seems. What was to hinder him from doing it again ? '

' I don't for a moment believe he changed his mind ; and I don't acknowledge that document as being my uncle's will,' said Mr Boldon, pointing scornfully at the paper, which lay on the writing-table. ' I will take measures to have that will upset at once.'

' Now you speak rationally, if I may be allowed to say so,' said Mr Felix, with evident sarcasm. ' I shall be most happy to accept service of any writ on Lady Boldon's behalf, or on behalf of her husband's executors.—I presume, gentlemen, you accept the trust which the will begs you to undertake ? '

The two trustees glanced ruefully at each other, but signified their acceptance of the trust ; and Mr Boldon, finding that nobody paid any attention to him, made the best of his way out of the house, and took the first train to London, whither Mr Felix followed him the same afternoon.

#### OUR PRIME MOVERS, AND SOURCES OF POWER IN NATURE.

THE surface of this earth of ours is the scene of continuous change ; of the development and expenditure of enormous energies. As the seasons alternate, for example, continents and even oceans are bound in rigid frost, and again relaxed in the genial warmth of the summer sun. Vegetation comes and goes. Countless forests of trees and flowers—structures, all of them, of the rarest beauty—raise their heads to wave and worship in the breeze, then hasten to decay. The winds of heaven change about, blowing high and low. The tides flow and ebb, and the ocean is traversed by unseen currents. Millions of tons of water are borne to the sky. ' All the rivers run into the sea ; yet the sea is not full ; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.' Nor should the energies of the animal kingdom be overlooked, although, in the general stupendous exhibition of power, these are but insignificant.

Then we have energy stored or in a latent form in the vast coal-fields distributed over the world : in the supplies of mineral oil and natural gas, and of other substances which only require to be brought together by the art of man to be made to yield the dormant power conserved in them from ages past.

Now, if our modern civilisation has one distinctive feature, it appears in the manner in which we have set ourselves to appropriate, and to control in our own service the great forces of nature. Our physical well-being depends upon the amount of useful labour we are able to command, and we now look with impatient covetousness upon every force of nature unharnessed in our employ.

We believe in the conservation of energy. We understand that the cycle of nature's operations is carried on without waste: that the heat absorbed in the upbuilding of plants is given back in the slow combustion of their decay: that the heat required to evaporate the water and carry it to its vantage-ground on the hills is again restored by the friction of the running brook and of the tumbling waterfall; but from the point of view of needy man, such manner of restoration is waste. The heat which would be evolved by the slow decay of wood or coal might as well be rapidly given off by combustion on his hearth or under his steam-boiler; and the heat returnable in the waterfall he would rather have restored through the friction of his busy spindles.

There may be truth in the sentiment that in production by machinery, and in the necessary subdivision of labour, the dignity and honest pride in work of the ancient handcraftsman has departed; but, be it for ultimate benefit or otherwise, the present age demands that every power of nature which can be made to do its work shall be laid under tribute. And surely, if the dignity of original handiwork is to some extent withdrawn from the general craftsman, he is not without compensation. The workman of to-day is relieved from the almost overwhelming bodily labour which our grandfathers underwent, and, through cheapness of production, the comforts of his home and table are greatly increased. Higher education, and a foretaste, at least, of that leisure necessary to enjoy it, are brought within his reach, and by these means also his sympathies are enlarged, so that the triumphs of science, art, and manufacture become his own. If—as happens in many branches of manufacture—his life be largely passed in monotonous routine, and his interest in his own special handiwork consequently lessened, his mind is the more free to enjoy the benefits and pleasures of intellectual culture; to exult in the general supremacy of mind over matter, and even to take his share in the conquest. Who should be more successful in the invention of labour-saving appliances than the thoughtful workman? Revised patent laws have brought him cheap protection for his ideas, and, in some of our leading workshops, systems of rewards are now in successful operation, whereby he is encouraged to keep his mind constantly exercised towards the invention or improvement of tools.

The medium or instrument by which power is drawn from nature and applied in a useful channel is termed a prime mover. The prince of our prime movers is the steam-engine. On this transformer of energy, more than on any other, have the skill and ingenuity of man been expended, and by its means have his highest conquests of nature been achieved. Compared with simpler prime movers, the steam-engine appears to labour under a disadvantage, as it cannot directly intercept power from nature like the water-wheel or the windmill, but must do so circuitously through the combustion of fuel and the pressure of steam. This implies further that fuel must be provided and conveyed to it, generally involving much labour.

These weaknesses, however, really entail the

chief elements in the supremacy of the steam-engine. In calm and drought, the windmill and the water-wheel must come to rest; but the throb of the steam-engine's mighty pulse remains undiminished. If its fuel does require to be brought to it, we have it within our power to make the supply regular, rendering the continuity of its action thoroughly reliable. Unlike these simpler motors, moreover, it is not chained to the source whence it derives its power, but may be stationed wherever required; or, taking its supplies upon its back, it can make off with the speed of the wind, carrying man and his commerce over land and sea.

The wide-spread distribution of fuel and water also renders the steam-engine ubiquitous. It has opened for itself a door of welcome in every land and climate where fuel of any kind is found, or to which it can be conveyed, and it is equally efficient on the surface of the earth or in the depths of the mine.

In view of the labour involved in procuring fuel, economy in its use is important. About a century ago, when the improvements in the steam-engine had so far advanced as to render its employment profitable, it was found even then, in its most perfect form at that time, to require twelve pounds of coal per hour for the development of each horse-power; and in the inferior engines of that period it might have taken double this quantity. Since then, the steam-engine has been undergoing a steady process of evolution, and in the present day an engine which requires over one pound and a half of coal for the development of the same power is considered wasteful.

The more recently discovered natural stores of energy, mineral oil and natural gas, are very largely made use of in the production of steam-power where they abound. In the great manufacturing centre of Pittsburgh alone the daily consumption of natural gas was found some time back to be 500 million cubic feet, equal to 25,000 tons of coal. One well itself discharged 30 million cubic feet of gas per day at a pressure of 200 pounds per square inch.

Crude petroleum oil forms a most effective fuel. Weight for weight, it is capable of giving off about one and a quarter times the heat of the best coal.

In recent years, the steam-engine has found a powerful rival as a prime mover in the gas-engine. It is similar in construction to the steam-engine, except that it dispenses with the boiler, and derives its impulse, not from the pressure of steam, but from the explosions of a mixture of gas and air in the engine cylinder. Under favourable conditions, and for moderate powers, its economy is superior to that of the steam-engine. Coal-gas is principally employed; but the use of petroleum gas has also successfully passed the experimental stage.

Where a fall of water occurs, or a stream is found of sufficient body and speed, the water-wheel, as a prime mover, cannot be surpassed either for economy or efficiency. The older forms of the water-wheel are familiar; but where the fall is sufficient, the newer form of submerged wheel, known as the water turbine, is preferred. The water is made to fall down a shaft, at the bottom of which the turbine is

fixed side uppermost. It is fitted with vanes, somewhat after the style of a screw-propeller or a windmill, the details of its construction being suited to take full advantage of the impulse of the falling water.

The water-wheel as a prime mover, and electricity as a means of distributing power, already go hand in hand in many important enterprises, and are certain of still wider application.

Works are now in hand to utilise a portion of the immense power of Niagara Falls, and in this case water turbine motors and electrical distribution have been adopted. A preliminary draught of 100,000 horse-power is being made, which, it is expected, will not perceptibly diminish the grandeur or beauty of the Falls. A huge pit 175 feet deep, 140 feet long, and 18 feet wide, has been sunk in the rock adjoining the rapids above the Falls, and from these rapids the water will be taken. Near the bottom of this 'wheel-pit' a series of turbines are being fixed. They are each of 5000 horse-power, the largest yet constructed. From the bottom of the 'wheel-pit' a tunnel or tail-race has been constructed to conduct the spent water back to the river below the Falls. The bulk of the power is to be used in a manufacturing town to be established near the Falls; but part of it will be transmitted to the surrounding towns already existing.

By all known methods of transmission of power, loss by dissipation takes place, and the loss gets much greater as the distance increases, finally becoming prohibitive. At the recent Exhibition at Frankfort, however, energy to the extent of 300 horse-power was employed, which was transmitted by electric wire from the water-falls at Lauffen, 108 miles distant, with a loss of power of only 25 per cent.

Here it may be worth while to refer to the popular fallacy that electricity is a source of power. It is true that power can be produced from the electric battery by chemical means; but the cost of its production has hitherto prevented its use for any but experimental purposes. Electricity, as now largely employed in electric lighting and other engineering enterprises, is known as frictional electricity, and is first produced by the steam-engine or other of the prime movers already referred to.

The efforts of experts have long been concentrated on finding some means by which electricity could be produced on a commercial scale directly from the combustion of fuel. Should this ever be accomplished, the days of the steam-engine would be numbered, and the bulk of the world's work would rapidly be undertaken by electrical prime movers.

In the British Islands we have, so far, discovered no stores of mineral oil or of natural gas worth mentioning as sources of power. Our main stay is our coal. Probably, however, within a hundred years the expenses of working coal will have become such as to seriously cripple manufactures, and the engineers of that day will require to look round in earnest for supplementary sources of power.

When the economical transmission of energy by electricity is better understood, power may be collected from the various streams and

waterfalls throughout the country, and transmitted to centres of industry. The old-fashioned but picturesque windmill may also be raised on every hilltop and harnessed in the same yoke. Electricity peculiarly lends itself as a collecting medium from such sources, as it is not only capable of transmitting, but also of accumulating power, so that from wide-spread intermittent sources, working night and day if necessary, a steady central power may be obtained. In the United States, the windmill has been reintroduced to much greater extent than in the British Islands, principally for the pumping and storing of water. It is frequently seen in a new and enclosed form on the roofs of mansions, where, in ordinary weather, it keeps the tanks full to overflowing. In times of calm it may be supplemented by the work of a small reserve gas or steam engine.

Water-power in almost inconceivable quantity is constantly running to waste around our shores in the flowing and ebbing of the tides. Water-wheels have been here and there erected to take advantage of the power of the tides; but before it could be utilised on a large scale, more or less expensive embankments and other engineering works would be required. The most favourable stations for such works would be at the entrances of natural harbours and estuaries, where large bodies of water flow in and out. At such places, dams would require to be thrown across, confining the current to narrow channels in which reversible turbine motors could be placed. The conditions, for example, are already almost fulfilled at Conway, where the channel under the bridges is already narrow, and where a voluminous tide flows and ebbs with great velocity.

Want of space prevents mention being made of interesting minor projects for the utilisation of nature's energies; but it is evident that, however it may fare in the future with the supremacy of British commerce and industries, there will be no lack of important problems for our engineers to solve. How admirably the surroundings of man are adapted to draw out his dormant capacity! He glories in endeavour and achievement, and indeed boundless is the scope for his activity. Each upward step, in either the mental or physical realms, opens up to his eager view widening spheres of enterprise. He rests happy only in the thought that regions of conquest ever stretch beyond.

#### A DAUGHTER OF THE KING.

##### CHAPTER III.

LULU rode silently and steadily as they pursued their journey, her eyes keeping their trained and ceaseless watch over the gray distances. The Major, in whose charge the men were, occasionally addressed a question or two to her, which she answered courteously enough, again relapsing into her former silence. For perhaps the awesome stillness of the great plain, with its brooding spirit of gloom, had crept into the girl's soul for the first time in all the savage life. Or perhaps the wild, prescient spirit, taught and attuned by Nature alone, felt the

chill touch of coming trouble, and bowed to presentiment's irresistible weight.

It was evening before they reached the gulch, in which the men lay in the stillness of resignation, and the sickness of hope deferred. If Lulu felt any weariness, if she had run many risks, and passed through many dangers that day, she may have felt repaid as she stood a calm, silent witness of the unutterable joy of the poor, weary men. For about twenty minutes they chattered away, as men of one nationality can chatter on meeting after a separation, quite forgetting their preserver, the girl to whom they owed this joy. Then they recollect, and turned to her. She was leaning against the horse she had ridden, watching them with grave, shadowy eyes; and they were about to overwhelm her with praise and thanks, when something stopped them. A startling figure rushed suddenly up the little gully, and to Hialulu. It was that of a tall, gaunt, old woman, in a coarse unbleached calico gown, very strongly resembling a nightgown, and a sort of turban of crimson print. Regardless of the men around her, the old woman rushed up to the girl, and literally wailed out, in a voice from which time had failed to eradicate the Irish tones: 'Oh, Miss Katie, mavourneen, what 'ave ye been and done? Oh, don't ye go for coming near your father's cave, or ye're a dead girl as shure as my name's Molly Lafferty. Panka—the fiend fly away wid him—came last night and told the master that ye have been feeling some Britishers down to Skeleton Gulch for nigh on three weeks. And your father took his Bible and cast ye off for ever as no child av his. An' he'll shoot ye the first time he sets eyes on ye. Oh ochone, ochone! Wishanin!' Having thus wailed impartially in both Irish and Indian, the worthy dame put her crimson handkerchief to her eyes and fairly sobbed.

Lulu smiled, and put a firm hand on her arm. 'Be quiet, Molly. Never mind. I counted on this before I began. But tell me, will he do anything to-night?'

'No; I think not'—emerging from the handkerchief. 'He doesn't know I've come to tell ye, av coarse; so he's waiting for ye to come home to-night; then he manes to shoot. I thought by that coppery rascal's face—I'll put some pepper in his stew—that he had something to tell the master; so I jest listened like, and I heard him tell all. And I heard the master say how Waunema had promised to make him a chief when he came home with victory; and the master had promised Waunema, if he licked the whites, he should have ye, my bonny. Oh ochone!—and Molly wept afresh.

But Lulu was anxious concerning the old woman's safety. 'Molly, you mustn't stay, or father will miss you. Go home quickly, and don't trouble about me. I shall be all right. I will take care he does not shoot me; and if he does—a slight lifting of the level brows spoke the rest.

The girl was firm in making the excited old woman leave the gulch quickly, fairly turning

her out by the shoulders. 'You must go, Molly aroon'—firmly—'or you will be without a home in your old age. I will come and see you now and again, when I know father is away.'

So Molly departed, sobbing and wailing out her eternal fidelity to her 'darlin barnie.'

Lulu watched her out of sight with a smile on her lips, then turned her eyes back into the gulch with an air of returning to business.

'What a brute that father of yours is!' burst out Larry. 'Just fancy!—going to marry you to that savage fellow, what-do-you-call-him?'

'Waunema. But father counted overmuch on the strength and weight of his will'—with a smile.

'You would never have done it, would you?' inquired Larry, with an injured air.

'Not whilst I had this'—and she drew from somewhere in the folds of her dress a revolver, bright and cruel-looking, whose steely gleam was reflected for a second in the dark eyes of the girl.

The soldiers were unstrapping rugs for the horses, and preparing the food they had brought; only Larry and Captain Jackson stood with Lulu at the mouth of the ravine.

'Well, we have been the means of depriving you of a home and a father's protection,' remarked the Captain.

'Think you I did not weigh all that at the first? I knew it would come. Be rather grateful that it has delayed till all is accomplished.'

'It shall be our care that you never lack a home though, Lulu,' said Larry quickly. 'We shall never forget that we all of us owe you our lives.'

Then there was a second's silence. The three stood gazing through the sombre fringe of pines across the great darkening plain, whose brooding stillness is not equalled by any other of nature's solitudes.

'And so Waunema would have made your father a chief, would he?' soliloquised Jackson, recalling Molly's words. 'Humph! You would have been a Princess, Lulu.'

'Not so. Only a daughter of a king is that.'

'Not a Princess; but yet a daughter of the king, Lulu,' half whispered Larry as the Captain turned his attention up the gulch.

'Oh no,' contradicted that gentleman, only half catching the words and turning his head back. 'Not yet. Waunema hasn't licked the whites yet.'

But Larry had meant that King whose kingdom stretches beyond this earth, whose reign is called eternity.

The British soldiery had fallen back on Fort Hunter; and having taken up their quarters within its walls, had strengthened the fortifications considerably. The fort had changed hands several times, being a much-contested possession. Having been first in the hands of the British and then the Indians, between the two the interior had got principally burnt down. But the strong outer walls were still left, and within them the soldiers pitched their tents.

Lulu also, when not roaming, made Fort

Hunter her home. She seemed much happier in the company of the whites, more contented, more girlish. The constant companion of Lieutenant Larry, she had, in company with that gentleman, got into more scrapes, and been guilty of more startling escapades, than all the other occupants of the fort put together.

In spite of her extreme variability of manner and mood, Lulu had become the pet and favourite of all within the gloomy walls of Fort Hunter. And her marvellous and exact knowledge of the country was of immense service to Colonel Harcourt. She was also an absolutely fearless scout, riding far and wide, and bringing back full particulars of all that was going on for miles round. Indeed, she was so fearless that she was a source of constant anxiety to the Colonel, who never felt sure of seeing her again when she had ridden away from the walls of the fort. But Lulu only laughed at all his remonstrances, and replied to his remark that she was sure to get killed if she were so intrepid, in her characteristic way.

'Get killed? Oh, of course, sooner or later. One thing is well, my life is mine alone; and there is no one to grieve my death whensoever it may come.'

And Colonel Harcourt was silent.

It was a tacitly agreed point that Lulu was to be taken to England as soon as the Indians were settled; but who was to take her had never been decided—indeed, it had never been discussed. Several there were who would gladly have undertaken the guardianship of the fitful and restless, but ever-fascinating girl. And Lulu, when she heard them speak of her prospective voyage to England, smiled in her half-cynical way, but spoke nothing.

So, for a short time, all had seemed to go well; but now, and for some little time past, matters had been growing very dark and gloomy in Fort Hunter. A slow malarial fever had considerably thinned its inhabitants, and provisions were running short. The fort had been a harbour of refuge for fleeing settlers from all round, each of whom had brought as much food as possible; but it had been right little they had been able to carry; and each family of refugees made it the more impossible for the Colonel to quit the fort.

Colonel Harcourt had been expecting reinforcements from General Hammond's division, ever since he had retreated into Fort Hunter; but none had come. General Hammond was at least eighty miles farther down south, having taken up his quarters at Fort Resolve. Either he did not know the full extent of the danger and emergency of the men in Fort Hunter, or else great difficulties had arisen in the way of sending them help. And they could not get a message to the General to tell him the true state of affairs. Several riders had ridden forth on the perilous errand; but none had returned, and no response had come from Fort Resolve, so great was the number and vigilance of the Indian scouts.

Colonel Harcourt had information too—thanks to Lulu—that he would have given anything to have got to General Hammond, amongst which was a warning as to the under-calculated strength

of the Indian army. But it seemed quite impossible to send either sign or word.

Amidst all the wild frolic, and the fun and excitement that the novelty of her present life produced, Lulu, too, had fits of deep, silent gloom. Away from the camp, lying on the grass, her eyes fixed on the blue dome of the heavens, the powerful heathen soul strove to pierce the thick darkness that surrounded it.

One day Lulu came home with the old stern, quiet look on her face. She had been away three days, and every one was becoming extremely anxious concerning her. They told her on dismounting that Lieutenant Larry had been taken with the fever, and was asking for her incessantly. She would go to him soon, she told them, but first she must take her news to the Colonel.

There was a conference in the Colonel's tent; but when Lulu entered—after their first glad greeting to her—they were silent in deference to the look on her face, waiting for her to speak. Addressing the Colonel, she briefly told him that the Indians had come down from the lower slopes on to the plain. They were encamped about forty miles from them, between them and Fort Resolve, and they were on the march for Fort Hunter. She had been very near the Indian camp that night, and had seen signs of preparations for a fresh march. Lulu calculated that two more days would bring them to the walls of Fort Hunter.

Colonel Harcourt turned to his officers with a gesture of despair. 'If we could only get a message to Hammond. But that seems quite impossible. We can no more stand an attack in the present weak state of our garrison than fly.'

'No. And if the General sends a small body of men, they will all be massacred. I don't believe he has half an idea of their strength—the Indians.'

'There is no doubt of that,' replied the Colonel.

'Had we better try once more to get a message to Fort Resolve?' queried a Major.

'The lives of four good men have been thrown away already in that attempt; and the Indians were not so close then,' answered the Colonel.

'We are all as good as dead men, then.'

'I will ride to Fort Resolve,' said a clear, decisive voice.

The men turned their faces to Lulu with an unconscious wave of hope; the tones were so unswerving, so calm and unflinching, they seemed to imply that failure had no place in the mind of the owner. But the instantaneous look of relief faded from their faces as they realised what that hope cost—the life of the beautiful girl before them, of whom, perhaps, they were all more fond than they would have cared to say.

'It is useless throwing your life away, Lulu,' said Colonel Harcourt.

'It is not throwing it away. One life for many is law. I stand more chance of getting to Fort Resolve than the others did, from my superior knowledge and experience. At the least, it is worth the attempt.'

'You will certainly get killed. And you

are so young. All your life lies before you,' went on the Colonel.

Lulu was silent for a moment. The five men sat and watched her as she stood before them, a tall, straight figure, full of an indefinable majesty, with one hand on the back of the chair, and dark, sad eyes looking away from them. Silently they sat and waited for her to speak, kept quiet by the utter nobility of this savage girl.

'What lies before me?' she seemed half soliloquising, with a rare smile on her lips. 'Life, you say. As if it were ever worth while passing by duty to gain more of life!' She paused again, and allowed her eyes to fall on the group of faces before her. 'I hear you speak of taking me to England with you. It is good of you; and you mean kindly. I am not very wise, and my experience does not serve me much there; but yet I am wise enough to know what that means. I am an Indian girl—in all save parentage only—and am ignorant; but God gave brains to every man and woman, and even I can see what would come of that. I am not much accustomed to your English language, and it will not come easily to my lips. But I know what I mean. You would take me to a land of cultured people, whose ways would be strange and bewildering to me, who would look upon me as a curiosity, a savage. I, here so self-confident and at home, would there have need to be taught like a little child. I should not be able to compete with your women in anything, but would be awkward, graceless. I should bring ridicule both on myself and those that brought me. There could come of it nothing but heart-bitterness and pain; for every woman is proud, valuing her dignity above all things—ay, even also a savage woman.'

As she ceased speaking, the lips of two or three of the men moved as if to speak, but they said nothing. They were amazed at the faithful intuition of this untaught girl. The smile on her lips deepened as she noted their silence.

'I shall start for Fort Resolute at the setting in of dark. Let me have a written message to your General, that he may have confidence,' she said briefly, and left the tent.

#### A FAMOUS PACKET-SHIP.

A HUNDRED years ago the town of Falmouth was a much more important place than it is now. A stranger visiting it to-day sees but a small number of ships riding at anchor in a harbour spacious and safe enough to accommodate a hundred times as many. In the town there is more the aspect of a quiet country street in some sleepy inland district than of a thriving seaport possessing some unequalled natural advantages. Such is the Falmouth of to-day. The tide of national life has ebbed away from it and from all Cornwall. It may return. That great harbour in the west may again be raised to a chief position among those of this country. But if that be not so, if Falmouth is destined to remain in its present rank,

it is the more needful that her past history should not be forgotten, and that some record should be made of the brave deeds and public services of those men whom Falmouth boasted of when she had a part of her own to play in the national drama.

Throughout the last century and the first thirty years of the present one, the men of Falmouth were responsible for the safe carriage of the mails and Government despatches to Spain, Portugal, the West Indies, and America. A fleet of nine-and-thirty swift-sailing, well-armed vessels was maintained for this purpose, subject to the control of the Postmaster-general. Their regularity of sailing gave them great advantages over private vessels; and being independent of convoy, they could proceed on their voyage without the irritating delays to which the Convoy Act subjected merchantmen—delays which in the eyes of many impatient travellers were scarcely compensated by the additional security of the escort, leaving aside the risk of parting company in a gale of wind, and thus being deprived of the security after all. At all times, English travellers have preferred a rapid journey attended with some danger to a slow one performed in safety; and the danger, too, was not very great, for the Falmouth packets had achieved a splendid reputation for fighting, though the Post-office instructions forbade them to engage when an action could be avoided.

So travellers came from all parts of England to Falmouth. The coaches arriving from Bristol or from London were always full; expresses were constantly riding in, charged with late despatches from the Government, which must be sent off at the earliest moment. The inns were crowded with passengers waiting for the signal-gun which announced that a favourable wind had risen, and that the outward packet lying in the roads would shortly slip her moorings. There was a perpetual bustle of arrival or departure; for the whole trade and social life of the town centred in the packets, and every inhabitant felt his pride gratified by their conduct in face of the enemy.

There are many stories to be told of the fights in which the Falmouth vessels were engaged; but on the present occasion only one packet can be mentioned. That one is the *Windsor Castle*, commanded by Captain Sutton. The *Windsor Castle* sailed from Falmouth on the 27th of August 1807, with mails for Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands. Captain Sutton, her regular commander, had remained on shore, and the ship was in charge of the master, Mr W. Rogers. The voyage was uneventful for the first five weeks; but early on the morning of the 1st of October, when Barbadoes was close at hand, a strange schooner, which had shortly hove in sight, was observed to alter her course and make all sail in pursuit of the *Windsor Castle*.

The duty of a packet captain, on finding himself chased, was to avoid action if he could. Mr Rogers well knew this, and accordingly set

every stitch of canvas which his ship would bear. For a time it seemed that the enemy was not gaining ground; but at the end of an hour there was no longer any doubt that she had the heels of the packet, and that an action was inevitable. Perhaps Mr Rogers and his crew, having obeyed their orders by endeavouring to escape, were not displeased at the result. To Mr Rogers, who held only a temporary command, the chance of distinguishing himself was doubtless welcome; and he set about his preparations with a cheerful confidence which had an excellent effect upon his men. The boarding-nettings were carefully triced up, and studded with spare sails and hammocks, so as to give some protection from rifle bullets. Pikes, muskets, and pistols were served out; every man was told off to his appointed station, and a small party was detached for the special purpose of guarding the mail, which, in accordance with the practice when a packet was going into action, was brought up on deck, and placed near one of the bow ports, heavily shotted, so that it could be sunk at a moment's notice if likely to be captured.

At noon, the schooner came within range, hoisted French colours, and opened fire. The Cornishmen replied promptly with their stern-chasers, two six-pounders, but evidently did little execution, for the enemy drew on rapidly, and coming within hail, ordered Mr Rogers, in what he termed 'very opprobrious language,' to strike his colours. On finding that he disregarded this modest request, the French opened a heavy fire, and maintained it without intermission for more than an hour; when—believing, probably, that their heavy cannon had pounded all the spirit out of the Cornishmen—they seized an opportunity of boarding, and grappled the *Windsor Castle* on the starboard quarter. A strong party leaped into the nettings of the packet, slashing at them with swords, and hacking at the ridge-ropes with long poles armed with hooks of sharpened steel. But Mr Rogers led his men bravely to meet the attack, and after a few minutes' vigorous cut and thrust, several of the enemy were piked overboard, while the rest leaped back upon their own ship.

On the failure of this attack, the Frenchmen cut the grapplings, and would have sheered off; but the mainyard of the packet had become locked in the rigging of the privateer, and, the wind having almost completely died away, the two ships could not possibly separate. 'Thereupon,' says the account, written by a passenger, 'our pikemen again flew to their muskets, pistols, and blunderbusses, our gallant captain all the while giving his orders with the most admirable coolness, and encouraging his crew by his speeches and example in such a way that there was no thought of yielding, although many of our heroes now lay stretched upon our deck in their blood. But then we saw the enemy's decks completely covered with their dead and wounded, and the fire from our great guns doing dreadful execution. At every discharge we began to hear them scream, which so inspired our gallant little crew, that many of the wounded returned again to their quarters.'

The French were indeed suffering severely;

and at about three o'clock, feeling the necessity for some great effort, they formed a second boarding-party, mustering every available man. Happily, Mr Rogers detected their design, and bringing to bear on them one of his six-pounders, crammed with 'double grape, canister, and one hundred musket balls,' poured this tremendous charge into their midst at the very moment when they were grouped together for the assault. A great number fell: the rest made a dash under cover. They were becoming demoralised; and Mr Rogers perceived the moment he was waiting for was near at hand. His men saw it too, and were growing eager; but he held them back still, and let the gunners have their way a little longer. At last, about a quarter past three, he leaped upon the bulwarks, and followed by five or six of his best men, sprang down, sword in hand, upon the Frenchmen's decks. There was a wild scuffle, but it lasted only a few minutes. The French captain led his men on bravely; but he fell dead; and his sailors, dismayed by the loss of their commander, lost heart, wavered, and were driven below decks. A packetsman exultingly hauled the French colours down; and thus ended an action of which the result was unexpected both by the victors and the vanquished.

Not till he stood upon his enemy's decks, and saw the survivors of the crew brought up from below in irons—a necessary precaution, considering their superiority in numbers—did Mr Rogers comprehend the force of the vessel which he had been engaging. The privateer was spoken of by those who saw her as 'the most complete vessel out of Guadeloupe.' She was armed with six nine-pounders, and a long eighteen-pounder, fixed on a swivel in the centre of the maindeck, and traversing upon a circle, so that it could be brought to bear on any point with ease. At the commencement of the action she had on board eighty-six men, of which number twenty-six were killed and thirty wounded in the fight. The *Windsor Castle*'s armament consisted of six four-pounders and two long-sixes; while her crew comprised but twenty-eight men and boys, of whom three were killed and ten wounded, one mortally.

This fortunate action brought Mr Rogers much into the notice of the public, and won for him not only his appointment as Commander in the packet service, but the rarer distinction of the freedom of the City of London. The crew were rewarded by the grant of several months' pay, and doubtless looked eagerly for another brush with the enemy. They waited long. Throughout the fighting of the next few years the *Windsor Castle* passed as if in time of peace. The American war, most fatal of any to our packets, broke out, and ran its course almost to the very end before the brave crew under Captain Sutton's command were challenged by the enemy again.

The date was actually fixed for the cessation of hostilities. It was but four days distant; and the action now to be described was the very last fought by a packet up to the present day. The *Windsor Castle* on the occasion was commanded by Captain Sutton in person. The

weather was hazy; and the American privateer *Roger* had come within a mile of the packet before either vessel was aware of the other's presence. There was but little time for preparation. The *Roger* hoisted English colours; but Captain Sutton was suspicious, and ordered the decks to be cleared with all speed, even whilst he made the private signal. It was well he had not delayed, for the signal remained unanswered, and the privateer drew very close. It was nearly dark when the first flashes came from the stern-chasers of the *Windsor Castle*. The fire did little execution, and a few minutes later the *Roger* ranged up alongside the packet. She lay now on one quarter, now on the other, keeping up a very heavy fire, and doing great damage to the rigging of the packet, at which her guns were chiefly pointed. Only one man was hit during this part of the action, and that was by a musket ball, which smashed the knee of the master, Mr Foster, inflicting a most painful wound. About half-past nine, the fire from the *Roger* slackened, and she dropped astern. This breathing-time was utilised by Captain Sutton in repairing his rigging, and in giving what rest was possible to his men. The enemy did not actually renew their attack for some hours, but continually ranged up within musket-shot, threatening the packet, and so keeping the Falmouth men continuously at their quarters.

At daylight she hoisted American colours; and on seeing the stars and stripes, the Cornishmen saluted them with a broadside, which was smartly returned. This second action lasted hardly more than half an hour; but the guns of the *Windsor Castle* were so well served, that at the end of that time the *Roger* was compelled to haul off to repair damages.

This was well enough; but the *Windsor Castle* had suffered more than her opponent, and her damages were indeed greater than could be repaired in the intervals of an action. Though her armament had been increased since her last action in 1807, her light nine-pounders were ill pitted against the metal of her antagonist, which carried ten twelve-pounder carronades, two long-sixes, one five-and-a-half-inch brass howitzer, and one of those long eighteen-pounder guns, mounted amidships, and traversing on a circle, which nearly all the American privateers carried, and which, from the facility with which they could be brought to bear on any given spot, turned the odds of many an action in favour of their owners.

Even without the dreaded 'Long Tom,' the weight of metal carried on the American vessel enormously outweighed that of the *Windsor Castle*; and this was not the worst. The crew of the packet was so small that not a man could be spared from the decks. In fighting the guns, handling the vessel, and repelling boarders on occasion, every available man was wanted. The captain of the *Roger*, however, was able to fill the tops of his ship with riflemen, whose fire did great execution, and harassed the Cornishmen continually.

At half-past eight in the morning, more than twelve hours after her first attack, the *Roger* having repaired her damages, made sail again, and laid herself once more alongside the packet.

It was obviously a final effort. A perfect storm of balls swept over the packet. Three men fell in quick succession, picked off by rifle bullets from the enemy's tops. They were carried below; but the surgeon had scarcely commenced to examine their wounds, when an eighteen-pounder shot entered the cabin where they lay. Fortunately, it did not strike the operating table; but the splinters flew in every direction, and one of them struck the surgeon, breaking three of his ribs, and causing other serious injuries. The number of men under Captain Sutton's command was so small as to render these casualties matter of grave concern. But the courage of the Falmouth men was by no means broken; and Mr Foster, forgetting his painful wound, returned to his station, and did his duty with the rest, until a second rifle bullet struck him in the face, and forced him finally to quit the deck.

The two vessels lay within pistol-shot of each other for more than an hour, exchanging a very rapid and destructive fire. The best efforts of the Cornish gunners failed, however, to inflict any decisive injury on the *Roger*; while, on the other hand, their own ship was fast being disabled. So long as he was still able to handle his vessel, Captain Sutton frustrated every effort of the enemy either to board or to take up a raking position. But the game was nearly played out. At 9.45 A.M. the *Roger* ran down with the evident design of boarding. On endeavouring to avoid her, Captain Sutton found his ship unmanageable, lying like a log on the water. Not one brace or bowline was left to the yards or sails. Almost the whole of the running and standing rigging was shot away; while the after-yards, swinging round, brought the ship by the lee. The Americans grappled with the packet on the larboard quarter, covered by a tremendous fire of musketry. The discharge from their 'Long Tom' swept the decks. The boarding nettings even had been shot away, and the path of the boarders lay open to them. It would have been madness to resist further: and having satisfied himself that the mails were sunk, Captain Sutton laid down his sword.

Thus ended the fighting record of the Falmouth packets—an end surely not without glory.

Captain Sutton, with his master, mate, carpenter, and a boy, were sent back to England on a merchant vessel. The rest of the crew were confined as prisoners on their own ship, which was navigated by a prizemaster into Norfolk, Rhode Island, where the privateer was owned. The following extract from the *Norfolk Herald* of the 28th of April 1815 throws light on their subsequent fate: 'The following statement of an affair which took place in this harbour on Wednesday evening last we have prepared from the evidence given before the inquest which was held on the bodies of the two unfortunate men who were killed. We have been more minute in stating the facts than the importance of the case should seem to demand; but we deem the detail necessary to prevent misrepresentations which might obtain credence, to the prejudice of that magnanimity and justice which the United States, in all

their intercourse with England, have ever strictly adhered to. The crew of the *Windsor Castle*, brought in by the privateer *Roger*, were on Wednesday last put on board a small schooner, and sent down to Craney Island in charge of Mr Westbrook, an officer of the *Roger*, with a guard of eight United States soldiers. Owing to a low tide, the schooner anchored some distance from the island, and the prisoners had to be debarked in a row-boat. Mr Westbrook took thirteen of the Englishmen with four of the guard to row the boat, leaving eleven others in charge of four soldiers on board the schooner. Before his return to the schooner, the prisoners on board rose upon the guard, and endeavoured to disarm and throw them overboard, in which, owing to the suddenness of the assault, they had nearly succeeded. Mr Westbrook got alongside the schooner while the soldiers were yet struggling with the superior numbers of their assailants; but they still held their arms. Desirous to quell the mutinous proceedings of the Englishmen, he expostulated, entreated, and threatened, but to no purpose; and it was evident from their expressions that they were determined on taking possession of the schooner and making their escape in her. He then leaped on board, and attempted to rescue one of the soldiers, when the fellow who held him, quitting his hold, seized the tiller and aimed a blow at Mr Westbrook, who warded it off, and ordered the released soldier to fire at him, which he did, and killed him. At the same time, another soldier, having disengaged himself, shot his opponent dead. The mutineers, having the other two soldiers confined, exclaimed; "Now is the time, boys! Don't give 'em time to load again!" and were rushing forward to seize Mr Westbrook, when he drew a pair of pistols, and commanded the mutineers, in a firm and determined voice, to go below, declaring that he would shoot the first man who refused. This decisive conduct had the desired effect. They all immediately descended into the hold, where they were put in close confinement.

The conduct of Mr Westbrook was truly praiseworthy. His intrepidity certainly saved the lives of the soldiers, and prevented the conspirators from carrying off the schooner, an act which, it is said, they had premeditated.

The two unhappy wretches who threw away their lives in this affair are represented by the mate of the *Windsor Castle* to have been habitually turbulent and mutinous. The verdict of the jury of inquest entirely acquitted the two soldiers of any blame in taking their lives.

Such, worded according to the temper of those times, is the American account of the final scene in the story of the *Windsor Castle*. It would be tedious to rewrite it as an Englishman would have told it; but it may be noted, firstly, that to speak of prisoners of war making a bold dash for freedom as 'mutineers' is to use harsh and unjust language; and secondly, that Captain Sutton gave the two men who fell a very different character from that which is attributed to them above. Their enterprise was desperate to the verge of rashness, or beyond it; but it was plucky, and it very nearly suc-

ceeded. No one need deny them their meed of praise.

England has forgotten as much of her naval history as would make the credit of a smaller nation. Something less than justice has been done to the memory of those brave men who maintained her glory in the smaller fights of the great wars; and it is well that, before the faded ink of the letters which describe them becomes undecipherable, and the brown and cracked paper decays irretrievably, some records should be made of those events, and some acknowledgment rendered of the spirit of the men who took part in them.

'THANKS TO THE SNAKE.'

AN INCIDENT OF CEYLON LIFE.

BY BROWN PATERSON.

'Is there very much more of this climbing, Mr Elverton? I don't really think I can keep on much longer.' And Lena Wolmer leaned up against a rock and panted for breath, as she looked at her companion, a handsome young man of five or six and twenty, whose sunburnt features took on a deeper flush beneath his broad-brimmed felt hat while he answered, penitently: 'Miss Wolmer, I'm awfully sorry; but I thought we should have been on the top an hour ago. I really did, I assure you; and I am beginning to be afraid I have altogether miscalculated the distance somehow.'

'Are you quite sure this dreadful mountain has a top?' asked Miss Wolmer. 'For my part, I have very considerable doubts on the subject. Or perhaps'—she went on with a laugh—'the trouble is that Mr Elverton does not know how to find it? Come, Mr Elverton, confess you have lost the way. Your easy manner does not deceive me in the least, and I have been quite convinced for some time that you were off the track; so you may as well make an open disclosure of your errors. What is the good of going on, up, and up, and up, and never apparently getting any nearer the end of our journey?'

The young planter looked somewhat abashed as he replied: 'I have observed that as a general rule if one continues to go up a hill, one comes to the top some time or other. This mountain, however, I am bound to admit, seems fated to prove the opposite. In fact, as you very neatly put it, either Hantana has no top at all, or else'— He paused, and met the merry sparkle in Miss Wolmer's eyes with a like twinkle in his own.

'Yes, Mr Elverton?'

'Well, or else, I don't know how to get there. Now, the whole story is out, Miss Lena, and it only remains for you to crush me with your scorn.'

'Then, you *have* lost the road! Oh, this is truly delicious!' cried Lena, clapping her hands.

'What will Harry say, when he hears? You remember how he scoffed last night when you proposed the expedition: "Nonsense! Take a lady through that jungle. It can't be done; the thing is perfectly preposterous, and not to be thought of." He will never let us hear the end of this morning's work, I am afraid, Mr Elverton.'

'Me, you mean. He can't throw any contempt on *your* shoulders, Miss Lena. It is all my fault you have not seen the sun rise from the top of Hantana; and I shall never cease to be humiliated, when I think of it. However, don't let us dwell on our ignoble failure any longer. Suppose we throw the thing up now, and go no farther? I can see you are fatigued; and you have done enough, anyway, already for the honour and glory of your sex; for I am quite sure no woman—no English woman, at least—was ever so far up the steep sides of Hantana. Besides, the sun is growing hot, and it will soon be almost dangerous for you to be out in it. Even as it is, we shall have a scorching going back to our horses, unless I am much mistaken.'

'Well,' assented Miss Wolmer, 'I should not have liked to make the proposal myself, for I always hate to be the first to give in; but since you have owned to your sins so honestly, I don't mind confessing on my side that I've had quite enough of Ceylon mountaineering to last me for the rest of my life. Creepers and tree-fern are lovely to look at; but when it comes to struggling up hill through the jungle, I think I prefer the less picturesque vegetation of my native land.—I must really have a rest before we begin the descent, Mr Elverton.'

'Are you so very tired, then?' asked Tom Elverton, looking at her anxiously. 'I shall never forgive myself, Miss Lena, if you are the worse of this mad exploit. I cannot forget it was I who proposed it.—See—here is a stone that looks pretty comfortable. Do you think you could manage to get a little rest on it, while I go along this ridge a bit and see if I can't find you an orange or two? I think I can make out some native huts down yon hollow, and there are always oranges or plantains in the Singalee man's garden. I'll have a look at the lie of the land too: there must be an easier way down, you know, for I have evidently got off the track somehow coming up.'

'Very well,' replied Lena. 'Go, by all means, Mr Elverton; and may every success attend you. I shall be glad if we can get back without passing through that scarlet lantana again; for, though it is so beautiful, I shall not soon forget how it can scratch one's face and hands.—But don't be vexed with yourself for bringing me here. I wanted to come just as much as you wanted to take me, and though I am just a little tired now, the whole trip has been delightful so far. I don't believe, moreover, the sunrise could have possibly been any grander from the top than from the point we saw it. The view of those waves of mist rolling off these great peaks was magnificent, and well worth all our toil; so, do not think for a moment I regret our expedition, Mr Elverton, though in a certain sense it has been a failure.'

'It is like you to say so,' responded Tom gratefully. 'All the same, I feel I have disgraced myself. I was so cock-sure I could find the way, I wouldn't even bring a coolie with us. If I had, we should never have got into this mess.—But,' continued the young planter in a lower tone, as he arranged Lena's shawl on the rock, and poked about with his stick to make sure no hidden snake or venomous spider would share her resting-place, 'you must remember what a temptation it was to me to have you all to myself for a few hours.'

Lena Wolmer's cheeks flushed, but she made no reply; and Tom, after lingering for a moment or two, as if expecting her to answer, went off, as he said, 'to explore.'

The young lady watched him disappear round the end of the next rock, and then turned to feast her eyes on the prospect before her. Away below lay Kandy, the lovely little mountain capital of Ceylon, its white houses and red-tiled roofs already shining in the morning's sunbeams; and between her and them, the waters of the lake gleamed through the sagopalms and cocoa-nut trees; while, far away to the left, she could just catch a sparkle here and there of the broad Mahawelliganga flowing silently to its ocean home, past the dark-green coffee estates and the lighter-tinted paddy-fields. Nearer, the sun shone on miles of tea plantations, with here and there the picturesque bungalow of a planter, or a row of native huts, which Lena had already learned to call 'lines.' Amongst them all, she easily recognised the clump of trees in the midst of which stood her brother's bungalow, and her own present home.

Lena was a fresh arrival in Ceylon. A good many years younger than her only brother, the clever, long-headed proprietor of Duemalla estate, she had spent her orphan girlhood at a London boarding-school, and hardly ever remembered that she had a brother, except when his annual letter, containing the draft to pay her fees, brought him to her mind. But there were just these two left out of their family: he, the eldest, and she, the youngest; and when her school-days were done, there seemed nothing else for her to do but to go out and join him in his far-off home. Harry Wolmer was not greatly delighted. He had a poor opinion of women generally, and looked forward to his sister's arrival as a disagreeable event that could not be prevented. However, when she came, he was very kind to her, and endured with wonderful patience the invasion of his old bachelor privacy by all the young fellows round about, who came like bees to a sugar-bowl, as soon as the district learned that Wolmer's sister had appeared. The proprietor of Duemalla had really something to endure; his front veranda was besieged by ardent youths, who came uninvited to breakfast, tiffin, and dinner, and hung over the new mistress of the bungalow, listening to her conversation as if she were inspired, accompanying her songs on their violins, or bringing her the skins of all sorts of wild animals which they had shot, and snipe, which they implored her to have cooked for her dinner; while the back veranda was equally crowded with their horse-keepers, snor-

ing comfortably in shady corners, or chewing the social betel-nut in the intervals of discussing their masters' characters. However, Mr Wolmer bore it all with great good-nature, and only inquired now and then of Lena when the wedding was to be, and which of all her adorers was the man of her choice.

Lena on her part enjoyed her position immensely. It was a new thing to her to be so courted and admired; and though she was sorry for the unfortunates whom she was constantly rejecting, her head was perhaps just a trifle turned by all the admiration she received. One very wealthy Scotchman paid her special attention, and she had determined to marry him. When he asked her, she would accept him, though she liked Tom Elverton best. But Tom was only a poor S. D., or 'little master,' as the Tamils say. In other words, he was simply Mr Wolmer's assistant, and had not a penny beyond his salary. And Lena, who had been poor all her life, did not feel inclined to go on in poverty when luxury and riches were within her reach. So Tom had been rejected, like the other ten or eleven adorers who had offered themselves to Miss Wolmer; but he still came about the bungalow, though he had no hope in his heart. He could not bear to stay away, somehow; and yesterday, when Lena had expressed a wish to see the sun rise from Hantana, he had been lifted up into the seventh heaven of joy, when she accepted his offer of himself as a guide. To tell the truth, Lena was specially sorry for Tom; and though she was quite resolved not to marry him, she could not resist making him as happy as she was able, in the meantime. Her eyes got dewy now, as she thought of him and his tender care of her all the way up. 'Poor Tom!' she mused. 'I wonder why the nicest people are always the ones that have no money? Now, if I had money, or he had been rich, we might have been happy together. But then, it is not to be thought of, Lena, my dear. A girl with ten pounds a year to her fortune can't marry a man with nothing a year for his, that's certain; and Harry says the same; so there's nothing for it but Mr Alexander MacAlpine, though Mrs Alexander MacAlpine sounds dreadful compared with—'

But Lena did not finish her thoughts. The long rest after exertion, combined with the heat, was beginning to make her drowsy. The rustle of the leaves of a palm-tree near, as they flapped backwards and forwards in the breeze, sounded in her ears like the distant wash of the ocean, and she fancied herself back on board ship, lying in her berth, and listening to the lapping of the water against the side of the vessel. Then she was at school, and the governess was speaking to her, and telling her to wake up. 'Yes, Miss Martin,' she tried to say, and struggled to lift her heavy eyelids, while Miss Martin seemed to stare at her with a strangely stony look. At last, with a great effort, she opened her eyes. There, facing her, and just rearing its head to strike, sat a large snake. His beautiful glossy skin shone in the bright sun, and his eyes were fixed on her. Lena uttered not a sound—voice and tongue alike failed her; and helpless, almost paralysed with terror, she

sat looking at the horrible creature, not daring even to breathe, lest he should make the fatal spring. Afterwards, she remembered thinking—such strange beings are we—how very exactly the two shades of brown matched in the markings of his skin. A moment passed thus; then suddenly there was a shout, and Tom Elverton, crashing through the jungle, caught the snake by the throat and strangled it. Quick as lightning it was done. Tom Elverton had not spent hours watching the native snake-charmers for nothing; but, in spite of his dexterity, the snake was swifter even than he, and, twisting itself round in his hand, it bit him on the wrist ere it died.

'Oh, thank God!' cried Lena, beginning to tremble, now that the danger was over. 'But it has bitten you, Mr Elverton. Oh, what shall we do?'

'Never mind that,' said Tom, looking at the creature, now lying on the ground. 'I don't believe it was a dangerous snake at all. Anyway, you're not hurt, and that is the great thing. I dropped my stick coming back, else I could easily have knocked him over with that; but I might have struck you as well; so perhaps it was a good thing I hadn't it, after all.'

Tom spoke lightly, but his face was visibly paling as he spoke. The pain was making him faint, and he leaned against the rock.

'Mr Elverton,' said Lena timidly, 'let me bind up your hand for you.'

He held it out without a word, and Lena looked at the mark of the bite. 'Are you *quite* sure it was not a poisonous snake?' she asked falteringly.

'Well, perhaps not quite sure,' he responded; 'but I think not, Miss Lena.'

She grew suddenly very red. 'Do you remember the story about Queen Eleanor, Mr Elverton?'

'Queen Eleanor?' he answered wonderingly, looking into her tearful eyes. 'I am afraid I am rather hazy in my history.—Oh,' he abruptly broke off, 'you mean about the poisoned dagger?' And his face flushed as deeply as her own. 'No, Miss Lena, that would never do, thank you. A man might allow his wife to risk her life for him, perhaps; but this is different. I am *not* Mr MacAlpine, remember,' he concluded rather bitterly. 'But if you will tie a handkerchief round my wrist, I shall be grateful to you for that; and then we must go down to our horses as fast as we can. I've found the road now, you'll be glad to hear.'

'Tom,' said Lena in a very low voice, 'if you will let me be your Queen Eleanor now, I'll—I'll be your wife afterwards.'

There is no need to record Mr Elverton's reply. But there is a lady now in the assistant's bungalow at Duenalla, and the *appu* who used to cheat his master in the most systematic and barefaced manner, has fallen upon evil days, for he has to reckon with a stern mistress for every pound of sugar and measure of rice he brings from the bazaar. Consequently, Tom finds, to his great surprise, that he hardly spends any more money as a married man than he did as a bachelor; and his stores last out ever so much longer, now

that 'Queen Eleanor,' as he calls his wife, keeps the *godown* keys.

In the centre of their cheerful drawing-room, mounted on a handsome brass stand, there is a splendid stuffed specimen of the snake tribe, which Tom occasionally shows his visitors. 'That fellow was the best friend ever I had,' he says, 'for through his help I got my wife.'

Mr MacAlpine is still unmarried; but it is supposed in the district that he has lately 'indented home' for a young lady to come out; and Mrs Tom Elverton is particularly anxious to know what she will be like. 'Though, Tom, my dear,' she says, 'I shall never be too glad I learned sense in time, thanks to the snake.'

#### AUTUMN IN NEW ENGLAND.

A GRAY, sandy road stretching away into the clear, far distance. On either side, a green ground-work, with masses of crimson and gold foliage, and flecks of purple and yellow colouring interspersed, leads the wayfarer along from one peaceful New England village to its neighbour, basking in the glowing warmth and colour of the Indian summer. The copse which borders this sunny road shows many of the typical trees of New England. The deep bluish green of the pines forms a sombre background to the silvery-stemmed birch with its delicate branches and quivering leaves. It was from the snow-white bark of the canoe-birch that the Indian made his canoes in New England before the white man drove him westward. In the distance, the scarlet oak rears its lofty head, its leaves turned to a brilliant red by the early frosts; while the white oak adds yet another hue in the beautiful purple of its fading leaves.

The flowers of New England often remind us of the Old Country. The yellow toad-flax and the bright-blue chicory (called succory here) abound on every side; but the flower which blows from east to west in this wide country is the golden-rod, that native of English cottage gardens. So characteristic is this flower, that it has been suggested it shall hold the honourable post of national flower; but others would give this pre-eminence to the little May-flower, one of the heath tribe, which was named by the earliest settlers as the first flower which blossomed in the spring after their arrival. The golden-rod waves its feathery head in contrast to the purple aster, which resembles closely our Michaelmas daisy.

Amongst the leaves and flowers of the golden-rod and the aster climbs the woodbine or Virginian creeper, with spreading scarlet leaf and purple berry. The sumach, with its graceful leaves and crimson head of blossom, grows abundantly, adding its quota to the mass of colour in the autumn. Away on the marsh-land grows the white birch, which always indicates poor soil. Its slender stems gleam through the yellow leaves in the sunlight. The pale valerians lift their heads as in the meadow-land of the Old Country, and the tall reeds

and grasses sway in the warm air. Here the bulrushes, too, stand sentinel round the pools of shallow water, covered with the leaves of the arrowhead and the water-lily. Where the land rises a little, we find banks covered with the checker-berry, a tiny red fruit, used for flavouring sweetmeats; and farther on, the huckleberry shows its rich bloom in the glossy leaves.

One of the chief industries in the marshy ground of New England, especially on Cape Cod, is the cultivation of the cranberry. The little plants creep over the ground with shining leaves, and a round scarlet berry rather larger than a pea. They are set in rows in marshy land which has been especially prepared for them, and in September and October begins the cranberry-picking. The schools of the district are closed for a few weeks, and the children come with their tin pails to pick the fruit, and often earn as much as a pound a week.

But with all the luxuriant growth of the waysides and meadows, there still lacks something to the English eye, for, search as you may, you will never find the 'wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower.'

#### CURFEW-TIDE.

'The long day closes.'

The thrushes sing in every tree;  
The shadows long and longer grow;  
Broad sunbeams lie athwart the lea;  
The oxen low;  
Round roof and tower the swallows slide;  
And slowly, slowly sinks the sun,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.

Sweet Sleep, the night-time's fairest child,  
Over all the world her pinions spreads;  
Each flower, beneath her influence mild,  
Fresh fragrance sheds;  
The owls, on silent wings and wide,  
Steal from the woodlands, one by one,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.

No more the clanging rookery rings  
With voice of many a noisy bird;  
The startled wood-dove's clattering wings  
No more are heard;  
With sound like whispers faintly sighed,  
Soft breezes through the tree-tops run,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.

So may it be when life is spent,  
When ne'er another sun can rise,  
Nor light one other joy present  
To dying eyes;  
Then softly may the spirit glide  
To realms of rest, disturbed by none,  
At curfew-tide,  
When day is done.

S. CORNISH WATKINS.

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